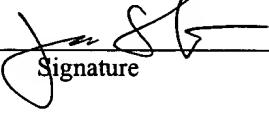


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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on 26 NOVEMBER 2001.

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Date

  
Signature

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In Re Application of:

O'CONNOR et al.

Serial No.: 09/922,218

Group Art Unit: Unassigned

Filing Date: August 3, 2001

Examiner: Unassigned

Title: HYDROGEL PARTICLE FORMULATIONS

**SECOND PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination, please amend the above-identified application as follows.

**AMENDMENT**

**In the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1-38 and substitute the following claims  
therefor:

--39. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a naturally occurring hydrogel and a pharmacologically-active agent, wherein the